HISTORY OF RESERVOIRS ON UPPER PROVO RIVER

Excerpts from a tape recording made by H. Cardwell (Cardie) Clegg. March 16, 1961.

Dams were first built in 1889 and washed out in the spring of 1890. These were on Trial Lake and Washington Lake. Salt Lake City interests protested rebuilding and nothing was done except in the courts for twenty years. Provo financed the litigation and acquired half of the water rights.

On May 20, 1910 six or eight men, including John Day (an old English soldier who had fought in the Boer War), Ed Perkins, and Cardie Clegg left Heber with three teams of horses and built a road to Trial Lake. This was a road over which a team of horses could pull a ton. The road was completed in 38 days on June 27. In many places the building was no more than sawing away fallen timber. Swampy stretches required laying down logs side by side in what was called corduroy construction. Of course, there was work with pick and shovel and crow bar in steep, rocky places. After a little assessment work at Washington Lake the next day the crew started back to Heber.

No one went up again until after the 24th of July, and then 25 teams were put to work on each of three large dams. Will Murdock was boss at Trial Lake. John H. Clegg (Cardie's father,) at Washington Lake, and Homer Fraughton was boss at Wall Lake. Ed Clyde was superintendent of the whole operation.

Dams were built using tongue scrapers and dump wagons. These dams held and were built higher a year or two later. The dams on Washington and Wall Lakes are still in use. [In 1986 a dike (not the big dam) on Trial Lake washed out causing a flood as part of the storage water escaped. It was decided to replace the old dam with one of modern design while replacing the dike. This was accomplished in 1990 at a cost of over a million dollars.]

Betweeen 1912 and 1940 eleven additional dams were built on smaller lakes on the Main and North Forks of the Provo River. All of these were made by the same basic methods that were used on the big three except the enlarged dam on Lost Lake where trucks and a steam shovel were employed about 1932.

George Clegg brought up the first live fish in 1912 when he planted one-inch trout in several of the lakes. By 1915 they had grown to 20 inches.

About 1920 a telephone line extended to Trial Lake making it possible for an agent stationed there to regulate the flow of the Provo River according to the daily varying demands of farmers below.

In 1926 the road was improved enough that automobiles with adventurous drivers could get up, and Cardie built his big cabin at Trial Lake. He retired from his labors there in 1965 after 56 years of regulating and caring for 14 reservoirs.